

Sale Name: Canadian & Abroad Fine Art Auction Nov. 22nd - Dec. 11th 2024

LOT 35 - William deGarthe - Seascape



Artist Description William E. deGarthe (1907 – 1983 FIN/CAD) A Finnish painter and sculptor who lived for much of his life in Peggy's Cove, Nova Scotia. Born on a remote island town off the northwest coast of Finland. deGarthe studied art in Helsinki while awaiting his call-up for active duty in the Finnish military. After his release from service, deGarthe obtained his passport – declaring his profession as "artist"—and emigrated to Canada in the fall of 1926. Landing in Halifax, Nova Scotia, he boarded a train for Toronto, Ontario intending to join other expatriate Scandinavians in the northern Ontario forestry trade. The work was hard and the climate unforgiving; after only two months he left the woods bound for Montreal, Quebec. Virtually penniless, he made his way to a mission where he showed the supervisor some of his drawings. Impressed with the work and with the 19-year-old's determination, the man introduced deGarthe to a local publisher who hired him as an illustrator in January 1927 at a rate of \$7 a week. While continuing his work as a commercial artist, deGarthe continued his formal art studies in Montreal at the Museum of Fine Art under Edmond Dyonnet but the restless young man was still seeking something more. Declaring he was on a quest to find "the most beautiful spot on earth", in 1930 deGarthe quit his job in Montreal with the goal of sailing to Brazil to join an aunt there. He travelled by rail to Halifax to board a ship bound for South America but on disembarking he was struck by the similarity between Nova Scotia and the rugged seacoast of his native Finland. He later declared, "I didn't have to travel any farther" Inspired by the work of Alex Colville and other prominent Canadian war artists, deGarthe resolved to use his art to inspire others. Around 1940 he began painting under the tutelage of Leonard Brooks. Over the next few years deGarthe would study oil painting under Stanley Royle at Mount Allison University in Sackville, New Brunswick. deGarthe later studied marine painting in Rockport, Massachusetts under Stanley Woodward, followed by Emile

Gruppe in East Gloucester, Massachusetts and George Groz at the Art Students League in New York City. He also spent many winters studying in Europe at the Academie de la Grand Chaumiere in Paris as well as Académie Julian in Paris and the Accademie di Belle Arti in Rome. Throughout his career de Garthe worked in many mediums; however he is best known for his atmospheric oil paintings depicting scenes of life on and around the rugged Nova Scotia coast. He also completed works in charcoal, pen and ink, lithograph and fresco and, in later life, sculpture. Beginning in 1942 deGarthe taught commercial art at the Nova Scotia College of Art, now Nova Scotia College of Art and Design University (NSCAD), later teaching younger students at the city's YMCAs and YWCAs and at his own studio. deGarthe became a prominent member of the Nova Scotia arts community and a strong promoter of the province's artistic tradition. In the early forties he joined a lively "round table" of Halifax's most influential artists including gallery owners Marguerite and LeRoy Zwicker, prominent editorial cartoonist Robert Chambers, photographer Robert Norwood and war artist Brooks. deGarthe's Peggy's Cove home has been transformed into the William E. deGarthe Gallery where 65 of his paintings and sculptures are on permanent exhibition. It is open from May 1 until October 31 each year. The gallery is part of the Nova Scotia Museum network. Although none of the works at the gallery is for sale, the North Shore Historic Art Gallery in nearby Lunenburg carries deGarthe's work. A permanent display of deGarthe painting is exhibited at the Nova Scotia Archives in Halifax. His works are also in the collection of the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia and the Barbados Museum as well as numerous private collections around the world. deGarthe's permanent stone sculpture The Fishermen's Monument at Peggy's Cove N.S. He died in a Toronto hospital on February 13, 1983. His funeral was held at Peggy's Cove and his ashes interred inside the Fishermen's Monument.

Description

Oil On Board

Signed Lower Left

Sight - 6.5 ins x 8.5 ins (16.51 cm x 21.59 cm)

Provenance:

Oceans Gallery N.S.

Private Collection

Quantity: 1



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